

BILL ANALYSIS

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Natural Resources & Economic Development
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Texas has been the nation's top exporting state for the last 14 consecutive years, with an estimated \$650 billion in trade in 2015 alone; exports support some 1.6 million jobs and contribute over \$200 billion to the gross state product.

The Gulf Coast region of Texas plays a crucial role in the prosperity of the state, as it is home not only to the largest concentration of petrochemical manufacturing and refining facilities in the United States but also to the federal Strategic Petroleum Reserve and a vital supply of aviation jet fuel for military and commercial use; in addition, Texas ports along the Gulf Coast are integral to the chemical manufacturing industry and to both the state and national economies.

This Gulf Coast region, however, is vulnerable to major weather events, including intense hurricanes, which in the recent past have devastated area cities by causing significant loss of life, destroying residential and commercial property, damaging sensitive ecosystems, and weakening local economies.

In response to the havoc wreaked by Hurricanes Ike and Rita, researchers at the Center for Texas Beaches and Shores at Texas A&M University at Galveston designed the Coastal Spine; plans for implementing the structure have included consideration of scientific research, historical storm data, and existing systems; moreover, the environmental impact such an apparatus would have on the surrounding area and waterway is being vigorously evaluated, and the study is expected to be completed in the summer of 2017.

The Gulf Coast Community Protection and Recovery District, composed of Orange, Jefferson, Chambers, Harris, Galveston, and Brazoria Counties, was created by Governor Rick Perry in the aftermath of Hurricane Ike; its board, which represents more than 6.5 million residents who live in the upper Gulf Coast area, has determined that the Coastal Spine is the best method for protecting against storm surges along the Texas coast; the concept has also gained widespread support from residents, businesses, and elected officials throughout the coastal region.

The potential benefits of the Coastal Spine are manifold, ranging from preserving life and property to spurring economic growth and cutting state expenses for disaster assistance, and it is necessary for the U.S. government to provide aid and support for further research, design, and construction of the coastal barrier.

RESOLVED

That the 85th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby express its support for the development and construction of a coastal barrier to protect the Gulf Coast region of Texas from storm surges.

That the Texas Legislature hereby urge the United States Congress to provide sufficient federal funding for the construction of the project.

That the Texas Legislature hereby urge the U.S. Congress to expedite the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers design and construction process.

That the Texas secretary of state forward official copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of Representatives of

the United States Congress, and to all the members of the Texas delegation to Congress with the request that this resolution be entered in the Congressional Record as a memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.